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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
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Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Reports by the specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its fifty-eighth session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

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I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-eighth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will examine the national reports of the Central African Republic, Georgia, India, Lithuania, Mauritania, Peru, Swaziland and the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture and communication and information. Gender equality is the global priority of the Organization for the period 2014-2021. It is pursued through a two-pronged approach: gender-specific programming and mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in all the UNESCO fields of competence.

3. Within the United Nations system, UNESCO has a major role in and responsibility for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Article 10 of the Convention provides that States parties are to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education. The right to education is at the very heart of the mission of UNESCO and represents an integral part of its constitutional mandate.

4. Efforts by UNESCO to promote women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality are guided by its medium-term strategy for 2014-2021, its quadrennial and biennial programme and budget documents, its organization-wide gender equality action plan for 2014-2021, which supports and guides the implementation of its global priority of gender equality, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and resolutions and international and regional instruments relevant to areas of action by UNESCO.

5. The commitment of UNESCO to pursuing the priority of gender equality is facilitated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director General. As the UNESCO focal point for gender equality, the Division provides policy guidance and recommendations to the senior management and the programme sectors for mainstreaming gender equality considerations in UNESCO policies, strategies and programmes; carries out capacity-building; monitors gender parity and work-life balance within the UNESCO secretariat; and develops and establishes partnerships with other United Nations bodies, regional bodies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, private foundations and private sector partners that support women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives.

II. Measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention in the countries to be considered at the fifty-eighth session

Central African Republic

6. The Central African Republic has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1962, but did not report to UNESCO for the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

7. In 2013, the Constitution of 2004 was suspended and transitional rule declared. The authorities reaffirmed the country's commitment to all ratified international conventions, notably those concerning the prohibition of all forms of discrimination against women and the protection of children's rights.

8. Under article 7 of the Constitution, the State guarantees to every citizen access to education, culture and vocational training. Education must be provided to young people by public or private institutions. Parents have the obligation to provide education for their children up to 16 years of age. The State and other public institutions create and ensure the smooth running of public institutions for the education and instruction of young people.

9. The State educational policy is based on the principles of political, religious and philosophical neutrality, non-discrimination, efforts to combat exclusion from school, the culture and spirit of partnership, the promotion of unity and tolerance and training in ethical values.

10. Article 1 of the Education Act (1997) stipulates that access to education, culture and vocational training is guaranteed to children and adults, regardless of sex, social standing, ethnicity, religion or political affiliation. Under article 4, preschool, elementary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions and informal educational centres contribute to gender equality, equal opportunities and the promotion of peace through the transmission of knowledge and skills.

11. Primary education consists of six years of schooling and is mandatory until 15 years of age.

12. During the reporting period, a regular programme activity on strengthening education and research in science and technology for girls and women was implemented, together with an extrabudgetary project on education on peace, human rights and intercultural dialogue, which involved, among other things, women's rights.

Georgia

13. Georgia has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1992 and reported to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention. In the summary report on the results of the consultation submitted to the Executive Board, it is stated that discrimination mostly concerns minorities living in densely populated areas, citizens living in remote regions, children with special needs and deprived of parental care, refugees and people living in conflict zones and vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. It is also

noted that policies have been developed with the objective of universalizing access to education. Although all problems in terms of the availability of educational opportunities have not yet been completely solved, activities and measures have been taken in an attempt to ensure equal access to education. As regards the application of the Convention and the recommendation with a focus on Education For All as a UNESCO priority, Georgia has clearly indicated specific measures taken to that end. Access to higher education based on individual capacity is also mentioned in the report. In that respect, Georgia has made efforts to ensure equal access, in particular in cases in which fees are charged for higher education courses.

14. Article 14 of the Constitution of 1995 (last amended in 2006) provides that everyone is free by birth and equal before the law, regardless of race, colour, language, sex, religion, political and other opinions, national, ethnic and social belonging, origin, property and title and place of residence. According to article 38, citizens of Georgia are to be equal in social, economic, cultural and political life, irrespective of their national, ethnic, religious or linguistic belonging. In accordance with universally recognized principles and rules of international law, they are to have the right to develop freely, without any discrimination and interference, their culture and to use their mother tongue in private and in public. Article 31 stipulates that the State is to take care of the equal socioeconomic development of the whole territory of the country. Under article 47, foreign citizens and stateless persons residing in Georgia are to have rights and obligations equal to the rights and obligations of citizens of Georgia, with exceptions envisaged by the Constitution and the law. Under article 36, marriage is to be based upon equality of rights and free will of spouses. Article 30 stipulates that the protection of labour rights, fair remuneration of labour and safe, healthy working conditions and the working conditions of minors and women are to be determined by law.

15. Article 35 guarantees for everyone the right to receive education and the right to free choice of a form of education. Preschool education is to be guaranteed by the State. Elementary and basic secondary education are to be compulsory. The State is to fully finance basic education as prescribed by law. Citizens are to have the right to receive State-financed vocational and higher education as prescribed by law. The State supports educational institutions in accordance with the procedure established by law.

16. According to the Education Act (1997), the State educational policy is unified throughout the country; the management and administration of educational institutions are decentralized and transferred to local governments in the provinces. Education is based on the principle of humanism, the scientific and democratic character of education and the recognition and appreciation of human and national cultural values. The Ministry of Education and Science aims at establishing a modern and innovative educational and scientific environment in close cooperation with civil society and advocates freedom of choice, fair competition, equal opportunities, civil integrity and respect for cultural identity.

17. Where higher education is concerned, article 16 of the Higher Education Act (2004) ensures equal treatment for all, regardless of ethnic or social origin, gender or political or religious beliefs, in higher education institutions.

18. Within the Fellowship Programme, two fellowships were granted during the reporting period to young women researchers from Georgia in the fields of comparative cultural studies and biology.

19. A project proposed by the Georgian National Commission for UNESCO, entitled "Women of the past: example for the future", was financed under the Participation Programme during the reporting period.

India

20. India is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

21. The Constitution of 1950 guarantees the right to equality. Under article 14, the State is not to deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

22. Discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them is prohibited under article 15. Nothing in the article, however, is to prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children. In addition, nothing in the article is to prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, insofar as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions, including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than minority educational institutions.

23. Article 16 stipulates that there is to be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State. No citizen is, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, to be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State. Under article 17, "untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability is to be an offence punishable in accordance with the law. According to article 18, no title, not being a military or academic distinction, is to be conferred by the State.

24. The Indian system of education is based on a national curricular framework that contains a common core along with other components that are flexible. The common core includes elements designed to promote values such as the country's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social barriers and observance of the small family norm and inculcation of the scientific temper.

25. In accordance with the national policy on education of 1986, modified in 1992, education is viewed as essential for all and fundamental to the nation's all-round development, both material and spiritual. Education has an acculturating role and refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is also well recognized.

26. Article 21A of the Constitution and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act provide for the right of children between 6 and 14 years of age to free and compulsory education until they complete elementary education. The central and state governments share the financial and other responsibilities.

Article 51A of the Constitution imposes a duty on parents to provide their children with educational opportunities.

27. The Act also provides for development of the curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution. It makes provision for preschool education, stipulating that the Government should make the arrangements necessary to provide services to support children of working and ailing mothers, especially because more and more women are seeking employment. Uncovered districts and tribal areas are given highest priority so as to ensure balanced regional coverage.

28. Within the Fellowship Programme, five fellowships were granted during the reporting period to young women researchers from India for their research in the field of bacteriology, biotechnology, global economy and information technology and prevention of crime.

29. In 2011, the Internal Migration in India Initiative was jointly launched by UNESCO and the United Nations Children's Fund. It is aimed at combating discrimination against and supporting the social inclusion of female and male migrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country, using a three-pronged approach combining research, policy and advocacy. The Initiative is now an informal network of 200 researchers, non-governmental organizations, policymakers, United Nations agencies and key partners, such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the International Organization for Migration and the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, determined to address the profile of internal migration in India and to propose policy changes and creative practices for better inclusion of internal migrants in society.

30. In 2013, with support from UNESCO, a web portal for gender, youth and migration was launched as a subcommunity of practice of the gender community of Solution Exchange, connecting experts, researchers, non-governmental organizations and decision makers from India who share a common concern on the topic of internal migration, gender and young people, tapping into research and policy recommendations from South Asia, Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa, focusing in particular on the most disadvantaged and the poorest women and men.

31. During the biennium 2012-2013, an extrabudgetary project on building the institutional capacity of community radio forums to strengthen marginalized voices and good governance was implemented, which included the participation of women journalists as content producers.

Lithuania

32. Lithuania is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to the seventh consultation of Member States on the implementation of the Convention.

33. Article 25 of the Constitution of 1996 stipulates that the freedom to express convictions and to spread information is incompatible with criminal actions such as discrimination based on nationality, race, religion or social position.

34. The Constitution stipulates that educational establishments run by State and local governments are secular and that religion may be taught at a parent's request. Education is compulsory for all citizens until 16 years of age. Instruction in public schools of general education, vocational schools and colleges is free of charge. Instruction in public preschool institutions and institutions of further education maintained or supported by the State is partially free.

35. Under the Education Act of 1991 (last amended in 2006), education is an activity intended to provide an individual with a basis for a worthy independent life and to assist him or her in the continuous cultivation of abilities. Every person has an inherent right to learn and education is a means of shaping the future of the person, the society and the State. The Act states that the education system is based on the principle of equal opportunities. The system is socially fair and ensures equality for individuals, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social position, religion, belief or conviction. It ensures access to education for each individual and the opportunity to attain a general education level and a primary qualification and creates conditions for in-service education or to gain a new qualification.

Mauritania

36. Mauritania is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

37. The right to equality is guaranteed by the Constitution (amended in 2012). Article 1 stipulates that the State ensures equality before the law to all citizens, irrespective of origin, race, sex or social condition.

38. The Constitution contains no provisions on education, meaning that the education system is entirely a matter of legislation.

39. The education system aims to provide children with the basic education necessary for the development of their personality. Education is compulsory between 6 and 14 years of age and is to enable children to gain qualifications to set themselves up in professional life through general or technical education and professional training. The programmes are defined at the central level only.

40. There is an important informal traditional education system known as *mahadra*, which provides education for more than 70,000 pupils. In the lower levels, it provides basic religious instruction based on the Koran and instruction in Arabic. In the higher levels, it provides instruction in Koranic sciences, Islamic juridical sciences and in Arabic linguistic sciences and literature.

41. During the reporting period, a regular programme activity on conducting policy-oriented research on gender and women's socioeconomic rights in the Maghreb was implemented, as was an extrabudgetary project on a professional course to strengthen the capacity of the network of Mauritanian female journalists.

42. Two projects relating to gender equality proposed by the Mauritanian National Commission for Education, Culture and Science were financed under the Participation Programme during the reporting period: one on education of girls and

women in Mauritania and the other on education and the role of the media in the promotion of cultural diversity.

Peru

43. Peru has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1966, but did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

44. Article 2 of the Constitution of 1993 guarantees equality before the law. No one should be discriminated against on grounds of origin, race, sex, language, religion, opinion, economic status or any other reason. Article 26 ensures equal opportunities in employment without discrimination.

45. The principles contained in the Constitution and the Education Act (2003) aim to promote the development of individuals through education. The system is decentralized, but the State establishes the guidelines of education policy. Education is free and private education is recognized.

46. Under article 16 of the Constitution, the State should ensure that no one is denied an education on account of his or her economic status or physical or mental limitations. Article 6 stipulates that all children have equal rights and duties. According to article 17, initial and secondary education are compulsory. In State institutions, education is free. In public universities, the State guarantees free education to students who maintain satisfactory performance and lack the financial resources necessary to cover the costs of education. To ensure greater plurality of provision, and for those who cannot afford their education, the law establishes the method of subsidizing private education in all its forms, including communal and cooperative. Under article 18, the State guarantees academic freedom and rejects intolerance at university.

47. In conformity with the Education Act, education relies on the principles of equality, which guarantees everyone equal opportunities, permanent access to high-quality education and inclusion, which integrates persons with disabilities, socially excluded groups and marginalized and vulnerable people, especially in rural areas, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, sex or other motives for discrimination, thus contributing to the elimination of poverty, exclusion and inequality. According to article 38 of the Act, illiteracy elimination programmes are carried out from the perspective of promoting human development, improving the quality of life and ensuring social and gender equality. Under article 55 of the regulations on regular basic education (2004), in bilingual contexts, the educational services of nursery schools ensure the development of the mother tongue as a means of expression for children, especially girls.

48. Three extrabudgetary projects relating to gender equality were implemented in Peru during the reporting period: one on mainstreaming gender in basic education, providing an analysis of curricula, textbooks and teacher training programmes; one on training women journalists in information and communications technology and gender; and one on strengthening comprehensive sexuality education in public sector management through multisectoral work.

49. Within the Fellowship Programme, five fellowships were granted during the reporting period to young women researchers from Peru for their research in the

fields of biology, microbiology, sustainable and renewable energy and comparative linguistics.

50. A project proposed by the Peruvian National Commission of Cooperation with UNESCO on the development of leadership capacities for adolescent and young women for institutional and civic participation was financed under the Participation Programme during the reporting period.

Swaziland

51. Swaziland has been party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 1970, but did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

52. Under article 20 of the Constitution of 2005, all persons are equal before and under the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life and in every other respect and are to enjoy equal protection of the law. A person is not to be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, or social or economic standing, political opinion, age or disability. Parliament is not to be competent to enact a law that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect and can enact laws that are necessary for implementing policies and programmes aimed at redressing social, economic, educational or other imbalances in society.

53. Article 59 stipulates that the State is to afford equality of economic opportunity to all citizens and, in particular, to take all steps necessary to ensure the full integration of women into the mainstream of economic development. Article 32 guarantees equal payment for equal work without discrimination.

54. The Constitution recognizes the right to free public education in article 29 (6), which states that every Swazi child is to have the right to free education in public schools at least until the end of primary school, beginning with the first grade. In addition, article 60 provides that, without compromising quality, the State is to promote free and compulsory basic education for all. Moreover, according to article 23, a religious community is entitled to establish and maintain places of education and to manage any place of education which that community wholly maintains, and that community may not be prevented from providing religious instruction for persons of that community. Regarding political objectives, article 58 stipulates that the State is to cultivate among all the people of Swaziland, through various measures, including civic education, respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human person.

55. A regular programme activity on promoting women in science and engineering was implemented during the reporting period.

56. In the biennium 2012-2013, an extrabudgetary project on scaling up HIV prevention through comprehensive sexuality education in Swazi secondary schools was implemented.

57. During the reporting period, a project proposed by the Swaziland National Commission for UNESCO on a mentorship programme for girls in industries was financed under the Participation Programme.

Syrian Arab Republic

58. The Syrian Arab Republic is not party to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and did not report to the seventh consultation of member States on the implementation of the Convention.

59. According to article 25 of the Constitution, citizens are equal before the law in their rights and duties. The State ensures the principle of equal opportunities.

60. Under article 45, the State guarantees women all opportunities enabling them to fully and effectively participate in political, social, cultural and economic life. The State removes the restrictions that prevent women's development and participation in building the socialist Arab society.

61. Article 37 of Decree-Law No. 208 of 1973 stipulates that education is a right guaranteed by the State. Elementary education is compulsory and all education is free. The State undertakes to extend compulsory education to other levels and to supervise and guide education in a manner consistent with the requirements of society and production. Articles 22 and 23 specify that the education system has to guarantee the people's continuous progress and adapt itself to their ever-developing social, economic and cultural requirements.

62. During the biennium 2012-2013, a regular programme activity on training young media professionals on investigative and election coverage through a gender-based approach was implemented.

63. Within the Fellowship Programme, two fellowships were granted during the reporting period to young women researchers from the Syrian Arab Republic for their research in the field of food science and pharmacology.

64. Within the framework of the Management of Social Transformation Programme, UNESCO organized a three-day subregional training workshop in November 2013 to enhance the skills of young women and men in advocating the promotion of social inclusion using social media in the countries affected by the Syrian crisis (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic) and to enhance the participation of young women in economic and political life through social media.

Annex

Educational statistics for countries reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its fifty-eighth session: gross enrolment ratios of females and males and gender parity index

Country	Year	*Gross enrolment ratio, primary*		*Gross enrolment ratio, secondary*		*Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary*		*Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary*	*Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary*	*Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary*
		Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*			
Central African Republic	2009	75	106	10	18	2	3	0.71	0.56	0.43
	2010	78	110	–	–	1	4	0.71	–	0.32
	2011	79	110	13	24	–	–	0.73	0.55	–
	2012	81	109	12	24	2	4	0.74	0.51	0.36
Georgia	2009	112	111	–	–	28	23	1.01	–	1.24
	2010	111	108	–	–	31	25	1.03	–	1.25
	2011	109	106	–	–	33	27	1.03	–	1.20
	2012	107	106	–	–	31	25	1.01	–	1.27
India	2009	115	113	59	64	13	19	1.02	0.92	0.70
	2010	114[a]	113[a]	62	67	15	21	1.01[a]	0.93	0.72
	2011	114	111	66	71	20	26	1.02	0.94	0.78
	2012	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lithuania	2009	101	104	105	106	100	67	0.97	1.00	1.49
	2010	100	103	106	108	97	65	0.98	0.98	1.50
	2011	98	100	105	108	91	62	0.98	0.97	1.47
	2012	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mauritania	2009	98	94	18[a]	22[a]	2	5	1.05	0.84[a]	0.41
	2010	99	95	19[a]	22[a]	3	6	1.05	0.85[a]	0.41
	2011	99	93	21[a]	24[a]	3	7	1.06	0.85[a]	0.42
	2012	99	94	25[a]	29[a]	3	7	1.05	0.85[a]	0.43
Peru	2009	108	108	90	92	–	–	1.00	0.98	–
	2010	107	107	90	92	45	41	1.00	0.98	1.09
	2011	105	105	90	91	–	–	0.99	0.98	–
	2012	99	100	84	87	–	–	0.99	0.97	–
Swaziland	2009	106	115	54	54	–	–	0.92	1.01	–
	2010	111	121	58	58	–	–	0.92	1.00	–
	2011	109	121	59	61	6	6	0.90	0.97	1.04
	2012	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Country	Year	Gross enrolment ratio, primary		Gross enrolment ratio, secondary		Gross enrolment ratio, tertiary		Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, primary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, secondary	Gender parity index for gross enrolment ratio, tertiary
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Syrian Arab Republic	2009	116	119	72	72	23	25	0.97	1.01	0.94
	2010	116	120	73	72	24	27	0.97	1.01	0.88
	2011	119	123	74	74	26	26	0.97	1.00	1.01
	2012	120	124	75	75	–	–	0.97	1.00	–

A dash indicates data not available.

[a] UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimate.